

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 001870

SIPDIS

NSC FOR ABRAMS AND LOGERFO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [IS](#) [IR](#) [GOI](#) [INTERNAL](#)

SUBJECT: NEW NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones. Reason 1.4 (B/D)

1. (C) Summary: Prime Minister Olmert has appointed as the new chairman of National Security Council Ilan Mizrahi, a former Deputy Head of the Mossad, to replace Giora Eiland, who will retire in several weeks. The National Security Council (NSC), created in 1999 during the tenure of then-PM Binyamin Netanyahu, will move some of its staff from its present location on the outskirts of Tel Aviv to the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem, a move reflective of its new role as in-house advisory body for the prime minister. According to press reports, the NSC will be subordinate to Yoram Turbowicz, who will serve as Olmert's Chief of Staff (septel) and will not be involved directly in diplomatic negotiations or managing ties with international bodies. End Summary.

-----  
NSC Chairman Mizrahi -- Mossad Expertise on Iran  
-----

2. (C) The Ambassador had an opportunity on March 7 to exchange views with Mizrahi on Iran in a closed discussion at Haifa University, where Mizrahi found a home after his retirement from the Mossad in 2003. Mizrahi, in his late fifties, served as head of the Human Intelligence (HUMINT) Division and head of intelligence within the organization. Mizrahi's appointment is read by many pundits as a signal of Olmert's focus on the Iran issue.

3. (C) In February, Mizrahi (protect), articulated to the Ambassador and several Haifa University faculty his view that "more carrots" needed to be extended to Iran in order to influence the outcome of political battles ongoing within the clerical leadership. Mizrahi acknowledged that the current situation in Iran is dangerous: "I believe him (Ahmadinejad) when he calls for a 'Second Revolution'" -- but Mizrahi nonetheless argued in favor of more carrots to help those inside Iran influence the infighting among the conservative elites. "We can definitely take advantage of this debate," he said, making the following points:

-- Mizrahi assessed that "the Iranians will have nukes. They would get them even under (former President) Khatami. They have been slow to advance, but firm (in their intention) to advance because they feel threatened. They are not just attempting to be the hegemon (in the region), but they have a Sunni challenge from the East and West. We are not playing this enough." The Iranian leadership views the U.S. and Israel as prime threats, and Mizrahi said they believe that the threat they face from the U.S. is "regime change." According to Mizrahi, this Iranian leadership needs some kind of reassurance that what we (U.S. and Israel) seek is a change in policy, not a change of regime.

-- Mizrahi emphasized that "change in Iran will happen from within, not from outside." There is debate at the top between two conservative leaderships: those with Ahmadinejad and those against him who are more practical. Mizrahi said that in 2003 (after U.S. action in Iraq), the Iranian leadership might have been ready to strike a deal, but Mizrahi was not sure that the same situation now held with Ahmadinejad, who, Mizrahi claimed, sees the U.S. as stuck in Iraqi mud. Ahmedinejad is getting more powerful, and is changing people within the sensitive security apparatus. For example, Mizrahi said he has nominated ex-Pasdarans to positions within the army and intelligence service elites. -- Khamenei may not be content with these developments, according to Mizrahi, who claimed that Ahmadinejad's vision poses a direct challenge to Khamenei and Rafsanjani. "Rafsanjani is very angry," Mizrahi added. Mizrahi warned that both Ahmadinejad and Khamenei are looking "more East than West" -- to Russia and China for support. Mizrahi offered that "we have more cards to play -- like the (Iranian) minorities: Azeris, Baluchis, Kurds, Arabs and Pashtuns. There remains lots of support for the U.S. in the Iranian street."

\*\*\*\*\*  
Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>  
You can also access this site through the State Department's  
Classified SIPRNET website.

\*\*\*\*\*

JONES